III. *A Letter of that curious Naturaliſt Mr.* Henry Barham, *R. S. S. to the Publiſher, giving a Relation of a fiery* Meteor *ſeen by him, in* Jamaica, *to ſtrike into the Earth; with Remarks on the Weather, Earthquakes, &c. of that Iſland.*

SIR,

ACcording to your Requeſt I have collected what I can remember, relating to a *Meteor* I ſaw in *Jamaica* about the Year 1700, as I was riding one Morning from my Habitation ſituated about Three Miles North-Weſt from *St. Jago de la Vega*: I ſaw a Ball of Fire, appearing to me of the Bigneſs of a Bomb, ſwiftly falling down with a great Blaze. As I thought it fell into the Town; but when I came within a quarter of a Mile of the Town, I ſaw many People gather'd together a little to the Southward in the *Savanna*, to whom I rode up, where they were admiring at the Ground's being ſtrangely broke and plough'd in by a Ball of Fire, which, as they ſaid, fell down there. I obſerved there were many Holes in the Ground, one in the middle of the Bigneſs of a Man's Skull, and five or ſix ſmaller Holes round about it, of the Bigneſs of a Man's Fiſt, and ſo deep (eſpecially the biggeſt) as not to be fathom'd by what long Switches or Sticks they had at hand. I did not hear that any was ſo curious as to make any farther Search: It was obſerv'd, that the green Graſs was perfectly burnt near the Holes, and a ſtrong Smell of Sulphur remain'd thereabouts for a good while after.

Note that we had a terrible rainy Night before, with much Lightning and great Thunder-Claps, which we have

have very frequently in *Jamaica*, often killing Cattle in the Fields. Mr. *Henry Lord*, who lives at *Dry-River*, had two Sons (big Boys) ſtruck dead with Lightning, in 1716, without any Wounds or Appearance of Hurt found about them. And as theſe Claps are much louder and ſtronger than any I ever heard in *Europe*, ſo are our Showers of Rain, pouring down in a moſt violent manner. We have Lightning all the Year round, but our great Rains are in the Months of *May*, *Auguſt*, and *October*. I knew *May* for two or three Years without Rain, which was lookt upon as a great Wonder; and we paid dear for it in our *Indigo*; for a Catterpillar appear'd and wove a fine Silk about the *Indigo-Plant*, and deſtroy'd it all, hurting nothing elſe. *May*-Rains us'd to deſtroy theſe Worms. *Auguſt* and *October* never go out without a Flood, we having then univerſal Rains, all over the Iſland, coming from the Sea: For we have often Rains in the Mountains from the Clouds lodging there, when we have none in the Lowlands.

Our Iſland is full of Mines, and, if ſearch'd into, I queſtion not but very rich. We are very ſubject to Earthquakes, ſeveral happening every Year, eſpecially after great Rains, which fill up all our great Cracks in the Surface of the Earth: For in a very dry Time, we have them ſo very large, deep, and gaping ſo open and wide, that it is dangerous to ride over ſome Parts of the *Savannaes*, for fear a Horſe ſhould get his Legs into them. Our Earthquakes make a Noiſe or Rumbling in the Earth, before we feel the Shake; and ſeem to run ſwiftly to the Weſtward. This is all I can inform you of this kind at preſent, relating to the Iſland of *Jamaica*, being ever ready to ſhew how much I am, *&c.*

Decemb. 19. 1717. *Henry Barham.*